mother, for example, fed her child rice gruel (okayu) at eight months and at the age of one year the child began eating sweet potatoes. By the time the child is ready to walk and play, he often carries with him a piece of sweet potato, and, in season, a piece of sugar cane. 853 262

A party is held on the first birthday anniversary of the child. This is more elaborate than the one which honored his birth. Birthdays are not celebrated each year. After the first anniversary, the next are on the 13th, 25th, 37th, 49th, and 61st birthdays, that is, at twelve year intervals. 852 527

The party for the first birthday of a child is particularly tender and affectionate. At one year, he can walk or stumble, and answer or smile to the calls of his parents and grandparents. He can pick up things, throw them, and make his presence felt. The exhibition of these skills becomes part of the celebration. It is customary to invite both relatives and friends, who bring a small money present, from ¥20 which is usual to ¥100 which is uncommon. [856]

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During the party, the child is given several symbolic gifts. These are placed on a low table in the middle of the room which the child can easily walk to and reach. Usually the gifts are a book, a fountain pen (or a writing brush, fude), an abacus (soroban), and a stack of paper money. These symbolize the wish that the child will become proficient in learning, writing, counting and mathematics, and will become rich. The child is eagerly watched as he unsteadily toddles to the table to see which article he picks up first. While the act is not taken seriously, the article which the child picks up first is supposed to indicate the field of endeavor in which he will be most fortunate. [212] [802] [554]

These parties, small or large, include men, women, and children, but the majority of the guests usually are men. After the child has gone to bed, the party continues. In more formal and larger parties, the guests first come up to the father, go on their knees, bow, and make a short speech of congratulation. Sometimes these speeches sound as if they are prepared beforehand, other times as if they are spoken spontaneously. There is an exchange of sake between the father and his guest, both sipping from the same cup, the usual custom. The mother and the female relatives during this time are in the kitchen preparing the food. 852 527 [576] [537]

Women sit by themselves. This is true of all celebrations when the sexes are together. Women do not drink. (In a similar party near Matsuda, the old women--usually over 60--drank a little). The jolly old women also love to dance solos in the traditional style. They dance with grace and vigor. The evening progresses without any planned entertainment. There is talking and drinking, singing, and samisen playing. Men, with a repertoire of Okinawan songs, sing in [562] [535] [887] [533]

1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

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Husband and wife usually are from the same village, but there are many exceptions. Marriages of persons from different villages have increased in the past decade. This probably should be ascribed to the greater mobility of the people and to the acceptance of free choice in marriage. It is common, for example, for a Hatsuda boy to marry a Ginoza village girl. It is also common for a boy in Hinatogawa to marry a girl from the nearby agricultural villages of Hanashire, Asato, or Oushichan. This apparently is a distinct change from earlier practices.

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If the family registers are accurate, the great majority of the men living in a village were born there; it is the wives who are more likely to be the newcomers. In the social structure of village life, it is the men who provide the continuity; the women are more likely to be strangers. The husband may point to his father and grandfather who live or have lived in the village; fewer wives can do the same.

2

The Marriage Ceremony

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In my experience, no two marriage ceremonies in Okinawa are alike. Marriages take place at any time of the year, but in all three villages, they were more commonly held in the late fall or in winter. The reasons given are that the heavy clothing and elaborate headdress of the bride are not suited to the hot and humid summer and that these can be more comfortably worn in the cool winter months. The marriage feast with its fish cakes, meats, vegetables, and a variety of other perishable foods can be more easily prepared and kept in winter. In the agricultural villages, the ceremony usually takes place after the day's work; in the winter the reception may start by 5 and the main ceremonies are over by 8 in the evening.

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Description of a ceremony at Hatsuda. The party began about 5 in the afternoon. Because of the large number of guests, the primary school was used for the ceremony. At the head of the first room, the grandfather and grandmother of the groom, the groom, his father, and the go-between were seated. Other relatives of the groom found places around the sides. Later the father of the bride, who arrived shortly before his daughter, joined this group. The go-between, a young man of 24, was a friend of the couple, and his wife was a member of the groom's family.

In the other rooms, opening into one another, about 300 guests, mostly men, were assembled. During the reception and before the beginning of the ceremony, guests representing their families entered the first room to congratulate the father, the groom, and the grandparents. In this period of congratulation involving the father, the groom, and the guest, there was an exchange of sips of sake from a common cup. As in other instances of congratulation, some speeches were long, some short, some well prepared, others extemporaneous.

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date of their birth (using the Japanese reign date), where they had gone to school and their present occupations. This was done separately for each. After this was over, the bride and groom stood silently and politely, but without outward expression, while three guests in turn, previously chosen, made speeches, offering their congratulations and best wishes. On this particular occasion, the principal of the school at which the bride was teaching, the principal of the school at which the groom was a teacher, and a mutual friend of the couple spoke.

These proceedings do not receive the undivided attention of the guests who have been drinking sake for some time. On the tops of the tables, dancing in the traditional Okinawan manner and the accompanying singing have begun. The dances and songs, usually performed by men in their forties and fifties, were done with grace. These are part of all social gatherings of any consequence.

The sober attitudes of the work day are cast aside. The best clothes have been put on. There is a great contrast between the bare-footed partially clothed farmer or fisherman of the daytime and his appearance at social occasions. These events are conducted with dignity and poise, at least until the sake consumption has risen to a high point. The party then becomes a noisy melee of dancing, singing, and talking, but without quarrelling or fighting. There is little self-consciousness in entertaining others. Talented guests do not have to be cajoled into performing. Dancing, singing, and samisen playing continue spontaneously, with another performer beginning after one has finished. The wedding party lasts from about 5 to 8, but many of the guests stay much later until the sake is gone.

Following the san-san-kudo, another but more private ceremony took place while the guests were entertaining themselves. In the wedding room, colored cakes and tea were placed on a small table. The female relatives of the bride and groom, mothers and sisters mostly, sat opposite one another and ate cakes and drank the tea together. This ceremony indicated the willingness of the bride's family to give up the daughter, and of the groom's family to receive her. After this ceremony, the bride's gifts from her parents were carried in. These vary with the family's wealth. In this case, they were a chest of drawers, a mirror, a heavy comforter, pillows, and a mosquito net. Before the war, gifts were more lavish than now. The usual presents now are a large chest of drawers (tansu), two heavy quilts or comforters (futon), a mirror (kagami), two Japanese type pillows (makura), and a large mosquito net (kaya). A poor family would be most likely to omit the chest of drawers. A new kimono and money may be included.

A Y20 note is the usual gift of an ordinary guest at a wedding. Closer friends will give about Y100. There is no uniform practice about gifts from the groom's to the bride's family. About Y1000 may be presented prior to marriage. The bride's family uses the money to purchase the wedding gifts.

The day following the marriage, there is another ceremony, this

ceremony the set of three cups (sakazuki) was used. The go-between, a man and a close friend of the groom, poured sake into the top cup. The groom drank; the go-between then refilled the cup, giving it to the bride. The same procedure was repeated with the remaining two cups. 585 184

In this ceremony, after the san-san-kudo, the go-between dipped a pair of chopsticks into salt, putting a bit on the open palm of the bride who then put the salt in her mouth. This was repeated for the groom. The go-between then dipped his finger into a cup of water, touching first the forehead of the bride, then that of the groom.

The presentation of the newly married couple to the guests was also done in a different way. Because of his close friendship with the groom's father, the mayor of the township introduced the bridal pair to the guests. This was a tender and affectionate speech in which the mayor told of the birthplaces of the young man and his bride. He asked the guests, as friends and relatives of the new couple, to teach them how to live well together, how to make a living, and ended by asking everyone present to have a good time. The celebration, the sake drinking, the dancing following the ceremony were essentially the same as in Matsuda. A ring was not used in either ceremony. When used, it is ordinarily given to the bride, not placed on her finger as part of the ceremony. [576] [537] [301]

A custom followed in Hinatogawa illustrates a variation in the preliminaries before the marriage ceremony. The groom (hanamuko) and the go-between or a friend go to the bride's home. They are given refreshments. The groom acknowledges his bride. He returns to his home to await her coming. This may take some time if the tide is not right. Before the war children from 7 to 10 years of age carried long lanterns (chōchin) with candles to light the way for the bride, as she walked to the groom's house. Each child carried two lanterns, which they held very tightly, as it was considered bad luck for them to change from one hand to the other. The lanterns have now been abandoned (when the ceremony is performed) in favor of flashlights, in another triumph of the Industrial Revolution. But the children enjoyed participating because they were given small amounts of money and food. [857] [416] [177]

In the Hinatogawa custom, everyone stepped over the threshhold. Even now, if houses do not have one, a long step is made from the outer stone or ground into the room. Among the guests, there is usually a jokester who humorously announces in a loud voice the arrival of the bride.

In Hinatogawa, the groom's family presents a gift of about ¥5-6000 to the bride's family. (This family would have to be in moderate circumstances to do this). Gifts from the guests are from ¥20-40. The groom's friends may give money to the groom's parents to defray the heavy expenses of the banquet, and the girl's friends give money to her, presumably for the purchase of wedding articles. [431]

There is one further variation in a custom from Hanashiro. On

584 she objects violently, the matter may be dropped. If the go-betweens
[851] succeed in making arrangements, they become the special friends and patrons of the young couple, officiating at the marriage ceremony and attending the rituals during the first week after the birth of all the couple's children.

The first engagement event is a small family affair at the bride's house, attended by a few close relatives of the couple, who ceremonially eat rice from the same bowl. The food is contributed by the groom's family. From this time on the groom may spend evenings and nights at
[836] the bride's house, where he is permitted to have sexual intercourse
[583] with the girl. For a man whose girl lives in the same village, the day is now divided between work for his own household and helping the girl's family in the field. The groom receives supper from the girl's family, who encourage him to stay for the night. The couple is never seen together in public, although the girl also helps occasionally at her groom's house.

The second engagement party is held some later time, also at the girl's house. All the relatives of the bride whom she wishes to introduce to the groom and his family are invited. The groom also invites his relatives and friends. Food and drink are supplied by the groom. Since this may be quite a burden, the bride urges him not to hurry in planning for this party. At this engagement ceremony, relatives and friends congratulate the male members of the bride's family and some of the close female relatives, the mother and sometimes an aunt, or the grand-
[537] mother. Short speeches are exchanged. The girl's father, in response to well-wishing, may point out that the girl is inexperienced and that she needs guidance and education from the groom's family. The groom also toasts his father-in-law, tells him that he will do his best, and thanks him and his wife for their permission to marry.

585 The actual marriage ceremony may be postponed until much later.
[584] One reason for the long engagement period is to see whether the girl becomes pregnant, or as one person said, "To see if the seeds match."
[842] There are also economic considerations. The ceremony takes place at the groom's house. The go-between, his wife, and a few friends go to the bride's home to accompany her and her relatives and friends to the
[178] groom's house. The elaborateness of the celebration depends on the wealth of the groom's family, but since the war, all families have economized in this as well as in other ceremonies. The cost of the wedding is carried by the groom, but it is to some extent offset by small money gifts which guests contribute. The groom gives the bride's family a certain amount of money—in one case about 2000 yen (approximately $17.00) or two thirds of a well-to-do Taira family's monthly

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira

cash income, earned by several adult members in joint work, or equal to about one half of a teacher's monthly salary. The girl brings a dowry consisting of furniture, household utensils, and other things, so, as one person said, the groom is repaid in one form or another. In former times the men had to pay a fine to the parents of the bride if she married out of the village (Suttles, personal communication; Tamura, 1927 translation:44).

Even under present conditions the wedding ceremony is colorful compared to most other private ceremonies. All guests attend in their best clothes and the bride wears a special kimono and a special wig hair dress. She is seated next to the groom, who wears Western-style clothes instead of the traditional silk kimono. The whole ceremony is presided over by the go-betweens. While preliminaries take place, the bride sits almost motionless. Her face expresses what Glacken describes as "undescribable gloom" (1955:218). This continues even through the climax of the event, the ceremonial exchange of wine which symbolizes the union of the participants. During this part of the ceremony the guests, who have been enjoying food and sake and talking amicably, give this moment a solemn meaning by their silence. Speeches by the go-between and other notables follow. The virtue of the bride and her family and of the groom are told and acknowledged by a thank-you address by the groom. Parents of the couple sit close to them but have no other function than to accept congratulations. The bride then goes around introducing herself to the guests.

Children are not present at this event. They line up outside the house and peek through openings to see the bride and watch the guests, who start dances as soon as good food and wine take effect. After the formal part of the wedding, the feast ends like any such event in the village—with great gaiety. The bride acts as hostess; she changes from her kimono and heavy hair dress into more suitable clothes and sees that the guests are well taken care of. The length of this feast depends, of course, on how much food and drink the family is able to provide. Finally, when all guests have left, the bride and groom retire to the bedroom which has been reserved for them, sometimes furnished with one or two pieces, a chest of drawers or a Western-style closet supplied by the bride's family. The bride also provides the comforter for the marriage bed. Friends of the groom may play a prank and replace the normal-sized comforter with a small one, "so that the marriage is consumated quicker," as they say.

Sexual relations between husband and wife are not discussed in public except in jocular references. In spite of the intimacy of household members in the confinement of a small house, one attempts to

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira

527 574 --held at the old warehouse, the village office, or, during warm days, outside—but also introduces all family or small group events. This is the time when guests arrive, polite greetings are exchanged with everyone in the order of his relative status, and a seat is found in accordance with it. Everyone sits quietly and politely, men with legs [576] crossed tightly in front, women resting their buttocks between their heels. The conversation is somewhat stilted and reluctant. Meanwhile the hostess and her female helpers set cups before each guest, and they, or the male host himself, may pour tea.

● 537 527 574 Village celebrations of an official nature, such as "Mother's Day" (see Chapter 6) or the reception of the newly elected mayor, or New Year, are times for oratory of a sober nature. The village dignitaries and honored visitors, frequently seated at tables overlooking the community on the floor, each give a speech consisting of lengthy inventories of events and accomplishments. Sometimes food and drink are not served until the last one has spoken, but more often the situation is mellowed by the simultaneous serving of food and drink, which add to the inspiration of the speaker and the enthusiasm of his listeners.

527 574 262 Special dishes are associated with different holidays, and food, when served, begins to dispel some of the formality. Even if there are no speeches, it gives everybody something to do and talk about, and as we shall see shortly, more effective stimulants follow soon. The ice is broken. The food set before guests may be red-colored rice, which is served at joyful events such as New Year, or white rice, which is prepared when the dead are commemorated. For agricultural holidays the special food is made from the harvested crop, rice or potatoes. A feast plate may also include some pork, cooked in soya sauce, or presented in a mixed dish of vegetables; sometimes, it may be deep fat fried dumplings, either plain or with brown sugar stirred into the batter, or red and white fish cakes, or even several of these together. Less expensive foods, such as noodles and fried fish, are also served during feasts. Tairans have a sweet tooth and eat with relish the pound cakes and cookies which accompany or follow a meal. There is a sufficient quantity of food for the many guests, and whatever they cannot consume during the party, they may wrap up in a newspaper and take home.

527 574 273 Once food is set before the guests, the emptied tea cups are refilled, but this time with sake. This helps immediately to loosen the formal atmosphere which still prevails, at least after one or two cups have been emptied. Before this happens there may be, especially during weddings, family affairs, or the Mayor's reception, a polite exchange of cups between two men, who fill each other's and present it with a little ap-

21Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira

preciative statement or an introduction. It is polite to make the rounds in this fashion, to sit before another guest, fill his cup and utter some polite phrases, then wait for a return compliment.

By the time men—and a little later women—have been served food and drink in some quantity, there is no more stiffness in the room, for with every cup of sake animation and voice volume increase. Speeches that have not yet come to a conclusion show definite signs of inspiration; each speaker who sits down is trumped in eloquence by his successor. Long after serious oratory has been dispensed with, a happy celebrant may get up and sonorously hold forth. During fieldwork the authors were frequently the aim of such addresses. In one of them a farmer, quiet and serious during everyday routine but known for his merriment and wit when in his cups, held forth on a future visit to Taira by these Americans. "There will be skyscrapers," he said in a booming voice, "subways, wide lanes and bright lights," and on he went to the delight of everybody.

On such occasions Tairans display their skill in playing with words and their ability to act and mimic. The assistant to the headman, similarly quiet on ordinary days, several months after our arrival came into a room where the authors were present during one of the many post-New Year celebrations. At an advanced stage of merriment himself, he turned to his host and by way of introduction said that he had just come from Hong Kong. "Oh, from Hong Kong," the host said, "that is why you cough so, kong, kong, kong," adding that he himself came from New York (pronounced in Japanese similar to *nyūyoku*, meaning "a bath"), whereupon the arriving guest went into the motions of someone taking a bath, saying "ah from *nyūyoku*," and so the fun went on, mostly as a take-off on the American guests who were present. This reminded the clerk of another story at the expense of the authors, which he told with gusto. "That first day he came to Taira, Maretzki came up to me when I was carrying pebbles from the beach and asked if he could help since he was going to haul pebbles too. Then he started to introduce himself, and I only understood 'Umaretsuki' (similar to Japanese for 'temperament') . . . I waited and waited for a story, but nothing followed. I did not know what to say." He had never repeated this story during many sober encounters.

At another event, when several teachers were present, one of the men, after much gaiety, turned to a female teacher whose husband had left for the city to find a job and called over: "Hey, your mosquito netting must be wide now, huh?" The woman blushed, covered her mouth with a handkerchief and laughed.

The evening is never old before one man, or several who are known

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira

left for later practice. When all the new words are presented in this fashion, the teacher takes the textbook and reads the passage once more to the class. This is a signal for all to pay close attention to their books. After this, everyone reads to himself. For about five minutes bedlam reigns as discordant voices fill the room. Then a child is called by the teacher to read aloud to the class. The teacher may call on several other students before instructing all to read to themselves once more, for the last time. Should a child make a mistake in reading, the teacher rereads the passage. The lesson is concluded with instructions to study it that night. In the evening, back in the village, one is apt to hear loud, sing-song recitations of the lesson being read and reread. Elementary school students delight in verbal presentations of whole lessons on the spur of the moment during playtime. Talent programs are popular among 8-year-old girls, and at village or school celebrations in which students participate it would be unusual not to have at least two readings offered. The school also promotes oratorical contests in which long, memorized stories are recited. Rote memory, discussion with association of facts, familiar with the unfamiliar, and imitation, therefore, are utilized in these learning situations.

Although reading allows for a certain amount of creativity in timing and flexibility of inflection patterns, penmanship is a rigidly controlled practice. As the teacher writes the character on the board, strictest attention is required. There is precise order in the sequence of strokes, as well as unquestionable direction as to how to form them. The teacher counts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, while writing the strokes on the board. All children have to raise their right hand and with the index finger write the character in the air, following the teacher's example. The character is written in this fashion four or five times before the whole class is sent to the blackboard in small groups to demonstrate that they have understood the principles of writing the character. This process uses imitation, repetition, and memorization in learning.

In the area of physical science and social studies, teachers are working toward practical applications of concepts which were presented in the lessons. Resources are very limited and so is the potential of actual experiences which a northern Okinawan village child is likely to have during childhood. Applying concepts mostly remains in the realm of discussion in class and not as much has been done to widen the circle as educators wish. Excursions to the beach and mountains help somewhat to integrate and bring into association those facts, mentioned in textbooks, which have reference to the local environ-